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Trump Already Has a Plan to Get Revenge on Alvin Bragg

If Trump retakes the White House, he and his team will arrive with a detailed plot to take down the Manhattan DA

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Former U.S. President Donald Trump arrives during a rally hosted by the former president at the Delaware County Fairgrounds on April 23, 2022 in Delaware, Ohio. Last week, Trump announced his endorsement of J.D. Vance in the Ohio Republican Senate primary. DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES

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Trump and his inner orbit are already drawing up ways to take revenge on Alvin Bragg, aiming to punish the Manhattan district attorney for his investigation into the former president, according to two sources familiar with the matter and two other people close to Trump.

For months, Trump and several of his political and policy advisers have outlined legal strategies for how they could use the Justice Department to pursue certain prosecutors and DAs, the sources tell *Rolling Stone*. Bragg had already been near the top of Trump's wish list of potential targets for a while. But as the Manhattan DA's criminal investigation into the Trump and the Stormy Daniels hush-money scheme accelerated and reached the point of likely indictment, Bragg's name started coming up even more frequently in these conversations with Trump.

Recently, "I have been [present] when the [former] president has asked people to draw up a plan for how to deal with Alvin Bragg and how the Department of Justice could respond to Bragg's 'illegal' investigation of the president," one of the sources familiar with the situation recalls. "This happened after we casually discussed with him some of our ideas for how this could work, and how it corresponds with his bigger agenda for 'law and order' policies."

Within the past several months, some top advisers to Trump have repeatedly briefed him on federal law enforcement guidelines and statutes that could be used by a second Trump DOJ to investigate and possibly criminally charge Bragg, along with other prosecutors who've attracted Trump's ire in recent years, according to the sources.

During such deliberations with Trump, policy advisers have told him that, should he return to the White House, his next Justice Department should unleash its civil rights division against Bragg. In this scenario, Bragg would be investigated and perhaps charged not only for allegedly politically motivated actions against Trump, but for supposedly "racist law enforcement practices," sources recount. (Trump himself has adopted a bizarre habit of regularly calling Bragg a "racist," typically without offering further explanation.)

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In gaming out how much of this would occur, the upper ranks of Trumpworld have explored using particular federal statutes, such as Section 242 and Section 241 of Title 18 of the United States Code, to have the DOJ go after Bragg. Those laws prohibit individuals from conspiring against an individual's civil rights and criminalizes federal, state, or local officials from abusing their positions to deprive people of their constitutional rights. The statutes derive from legislation passed by Congress as part of reconstruction-era effort to preserve the civil rights of former enslaved people. More recently, the Justice Department has used them to prosecute hate crimes and abuses by law enforcement, including in the recent case of a prison guard convicted of sexually assaulting an inmate.

A spokesperson for Bragg's office declined to comment on *Rolling Stone's* reporting. A Trump spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Bragg's grand jury investigation was widely expected to yield an imminent indictment of Trump, including by the former president himself. But this week the district attorney's office abruptly canceled a scheduled Wednesday meeting of the panel, pushing its deliberations into next week. But even if Bragg's case never goes to trial, he has done enough for TRUMP AND HIS lieutenants to deeming him fair game for this kind of so-called "revenge tour." The plans, however, are contingent on Trump — or someone willing to do his bidding — securing the GOP nomination and then retaking the White House in his 2024 campaign.

"There are specific federal laws, already on the books, that prohibit prosecutors and law enforcement from using their positions of authority to advance political prosecutions. The Biden DOJ will never enforce those laws against people like Alvin Bragg, but the next DOJ should," one of the people close to Trump says.

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Furthermore, the Republican Party's desire to put Bragg in prison — for the sin of crossing Trump — extends well beyond just the former president. Sen. Rand Paul, an ardent Trump supporter, tweeted that he “should be put in jail” over his pursuit of Trump, as has Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, another lawmaker close to the ex-president. Bragg, she tweeted, was “breaking the law and trying to incite civil unrest with his Soros funded political war.”

But well before the prospect of an imminent indictment in New York, Trump had already signaled that he plans to use a possible second term to exact vengeance on his enemies. “I would be entitled to a revenge tour if you want to know the truth, but I wouldn't do that,” he said during a February talk radio appearance.

But his designs for a second Trump administration already suggest he's preparing to do just that. As *Rolling Stone* first reported, he has told associates that he would gut the staff of the National Archives following the agency's role in reporting missing classified documents to the FBI which law enforcement later found at his Mar-a-Lago club. The plans follow a broader agenda, first reported by Axios, for a future Trump administration to purge the ranks of the federal civil service with particular attention to agencies which Trump has branded “the deep state,” like the FBI, Justice Department, Department of Defense, and State Department.

The use of the Justice Department's civil rights division to pursue prosecutors who have investigated Trump would stand in contrast to how previous administrations have exercised the unit's powers.

During the Obama administration, the Justice Department's civil rights division targeted what it said were systemic practices of discriminatory policing and secured consent decrees in places like Ferguson and Baltimore in response to high-profile police killings of Black men. The decrees mandated that the jurisdictions involved engage in broad-based reforms of court systems, police training and recruitment, and oversight of law enforcement.

In public, Trump has already called for Bragg to be “removed” from office alongside special counsel Jack Smith who is investigating classified documents found at Mar-a-Lago, and Fulton County district attorney Fani Willis, who is leading a grand jury investigation into alleged Trump election meddling. Bragg, he wrote on his Truth Social account, “is a danger to our Country, and should be removed immediately.” In a post on the social network Wednesday, Trump also demanded a “finding of Prosecutorial Misconduct” against Bragg.

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Trump's allies in Congress aren't waiting for a hypothetical second term to punish the Manhattan district attorney's office for its grand jury investigation of Trump's alleged affair. In a letter sent to Bragg, Reps. Jim Jordan, James Comer, and Bryan Steil—chairmen of the House Judiciary, Oversight, and Administration committees—have demanded that Bragg appear before Congress to testify about the Trump case. The chairmen also threatened federal funding for his office on the grounds that his “decision to pursue such a politically motivated prosecution” demands “congressional scrutiny about how public safety funds appropriated by Congress are implemented by local law-enforcement agencies.”

In response, Bragg's general counsel Leslie Dubeck sent a letter to the House Republican chairman offering to meet with congressional staff but called the Congressional demands “an unprecedented inquiry into a pending local prosecution.” The letter quoted from a 1957 Supreme Court case limiting the power of the House Un-American Activities Committee to warn Jordan that Congressional “Investigations conducted solely for the personal aggrandizement of the investigators or to ‘punish’ those investigated are indefensible.”